

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The Winter has finally arrived here in southern Ontario, after a November which was very strange with a cold snap early on followed by sunny days and relatively warm temperatures. This year, I finally broke down and signed up for a snow clearing programme, as the previous winters had found problems for me in using my hand operated electric snow thrower. Now I can just sit back and relax knowing that the snow will have disappeared from the driveway when I get up!

One of the really sad facts attached to our hobby is that occasionally we lose a fellow collector and friend. It recently came to my notice that Carl Spitzer had passed away in October but I had no knowledge of it until a chance message from the librarian of the Postal History Foundation in Tucson. Carl was a long-time member of the Biology Unit and his subjects were bees and microscopes. In fact, Carl won the Grand Award at TOPEX in 1991 for his exhibit titled "BUZZ". Carl received the Distinguished Topical Philatelist award at the TOPEX show in 1995. He also served the Biology Unit in many ways: as librarian for many years until 2005; as the compiler of an index for all issues of the journal for many years and also lists of Russian Zemstvos with bees in their heraldic devices and lists of microscopes on stamps. His obituary, which appeared in the Tucson Newspapers on October 18th, is on page 106.

The ATA has been searching for a new editor for Topical Time, as the current editor, George Griffenhagen, wishes to step down after serving in the post since early 1992, although he was on the Editorial Board for many years before that. This calls to mind the fact that our hobby is very lucky in having so many dedicated people who give their time and energies freely to the benefit of all collectors. The Biology Unit has had its share of officers and editors over the years that have kept the Unit and the publication on a firm foundation. Speaking of which, it is election time and a new slate of officers has been formed. A ballot is included herewith, so please take the time to vote for the slate or write-ins.

It is not too soon to remind everyone that the National Topical Stamp Show for 2010 is being held in Denver at the Crowne Plaza Denver Hotel and Convention Center near the International Airport. Start making plans now for putting together an exhibit or to visit the show and join us at the Biology Unit meeting, which is generally held on the Saturday of the show at 10 a.m. The show runs from the 25th to 27th of June. It would really please me to see more exhibits on biological topics, although some judges have said that this type of exhibit is very difficult to assemble. Well, I guess I can attest to that!

Our first trip in 2010 will be to the TEXPEX show in Dallas on April 16-18 and we are looking forward to that as we did not travel very far in 2009.

Until next time - Alan J. Hanks

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